

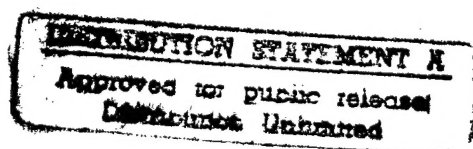
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Army Vision 2010

The Geostrategic Environment and Its Implications for Land Forces

The Land Force - The Versatile Force

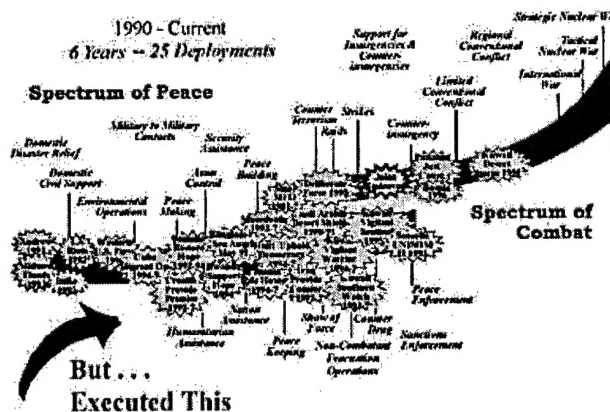
With the end of the Cold War, a prominent theory arose that there would no longer be a need for large land forces, that power projection and national military strategy could primarily be carried out through precision strikes using technologically advanced air and naval forces. This "standoff" approach would reduce the level of U.S. involvement and commitment and thus the requirement for large land forces. Reality proved that theory to be invalid.



During the 40 years from 1950 to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Army conducted 10 notable deployments



Since 1990, in the short span of six years, we have deployed 25 times- an increase in missions by a factor of 16. This new paradigm reflects the significance of land forces in supporting the National Security Strategy of engagement and enlargement.

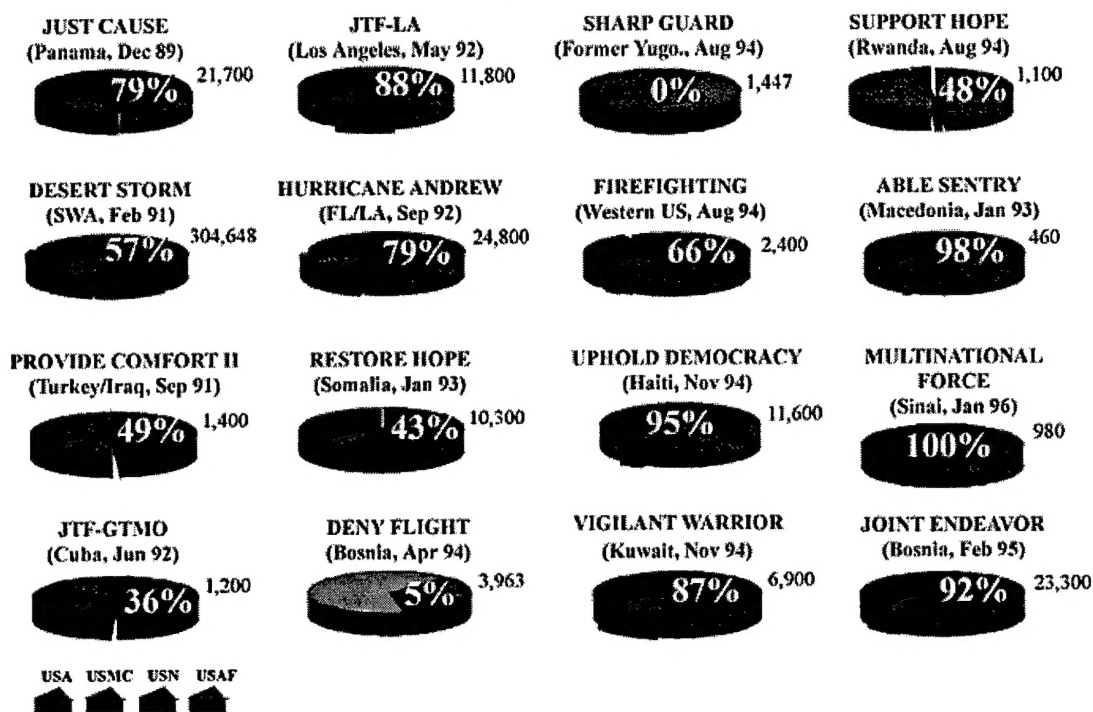


What will the future hold? The significance of land power as the force of decision will continue to rise for several reasons. First, most future operations will occur on the lower and middle portions of the continuum of military operations ranging from disaster relief to global war, where land forces provide unique and essential capabilities, the most options, and the most useful tools. These types of operations require the commitment of U.S. land forces to establish leadership and to enable our allies and coalition partners. They call for soldiers on the ground, directly interfacing with the civilians and/or military

involved in the crisis. Should the Nation's military be called to take on additional, nontraditional missions in support of a broadened National Security Strategy, the utility of land forces will increase even more.

The second reason for the rise in significance of land forces is their direct relevance to the National Military Strategy's strategic enablers: overseas presence and power projection. Without a doubt, all Services fulfill critical functions in support of these two enablers; however, two unique characteristics apply to land forces. First, they provide the most visible, sustained foreign presence- on the ground, 24 hours a day, person-to-person . . . cooperating, sharing risks, representing America. Second, as illustrated in the accompanying chart, land forces not only provide the most flexible and versatile capabilities for meeting CINC force requirements, from humanitarian assistance to combat operations, but constitute the highest percentage of the committed joint force.

Role Of The Army In Joint Operations



Third, land forces are important to the U.S.'s international credibility. The recent past provides a convincing example in the NATO deployment to Bosnia. Recognizing the substantial participation of U.S. air and naval forces over the past three years to support the naval blockade, air supply operations, and a no-fly zone in the Balkans, the NATO peace plan ultimately required a large, visible contingent of U.S. ground troops.

Fourth, U.S. land forces are most suitable for supporting the military's contribution to peacetime engagement and interaction with foreign military forces. The overwhelming majority of military forces throughout the world are predominantly armies. Few countries have the need or resources to maintain significant air or naval forces. Military engagement in these countries normally means army-to-army contact. Moreover, we see this phenomenon gaining importance. As former army officers ascend to key positions in their national leadership structures, the Army's cooperative ties will increase in significance and continue to provide U.S. leadership with valuable contributions to international engagement.

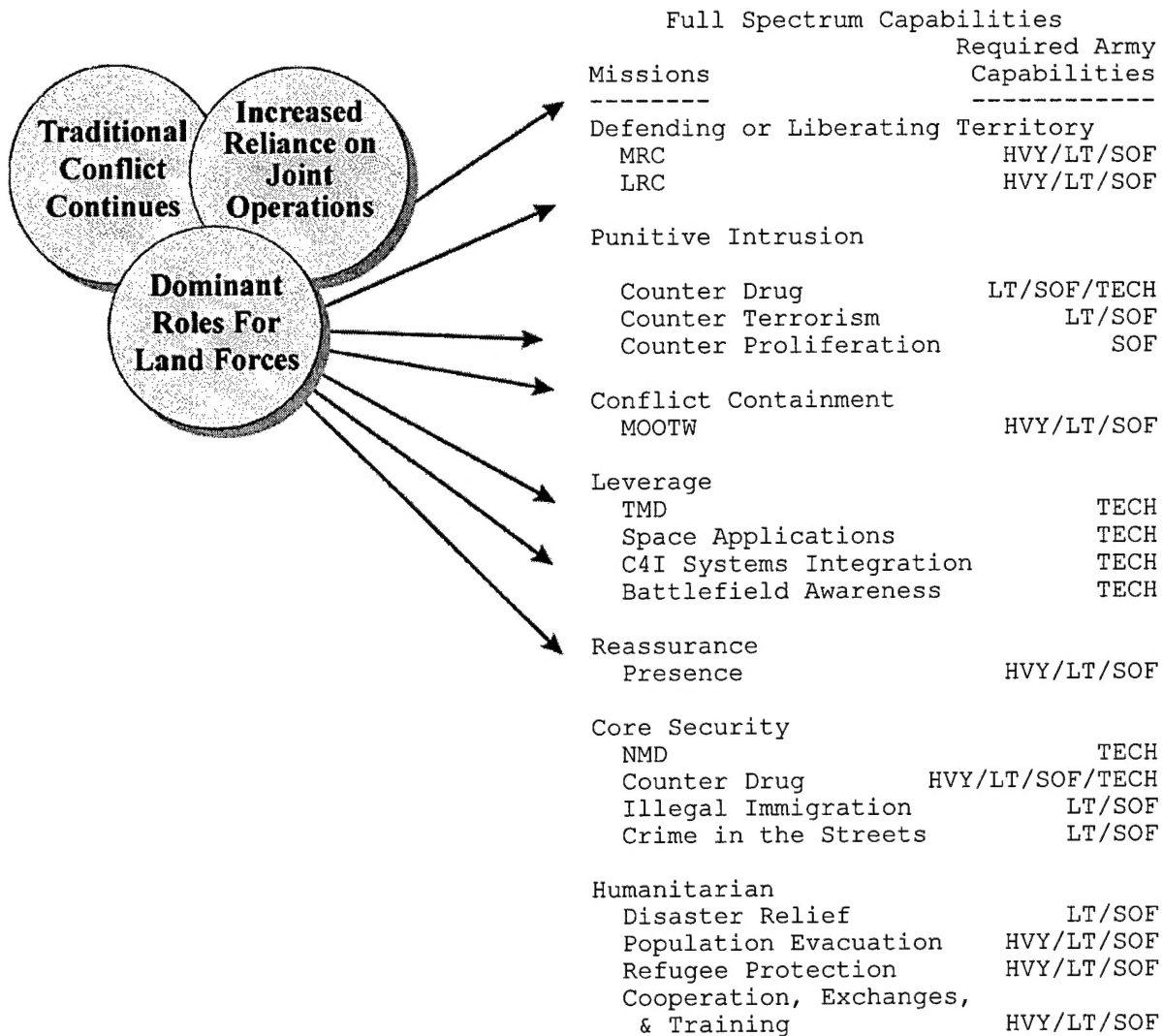
However, while cognizant of the increased demand for land forces at the lower end of the contingency spectrum in the near term, we must remain vigilant of the fundamental role of the Army- to fight and win the Nation's wars as the land component of the joint force.

While the threat of global war may be diminishing, the world continues to be a dangerous place,

especially in those regions where traditional conflict is an acceptable means of achieving national interests, specifically the Euro-Middle East and the Asian Arc regions. Within each of these regions lie numerous nation states on their way to participating democracies and/or advanced economies. In this "transitional zone," the inherent instability in the region could evolve into actual war as once dominant states perceive an unfavorable shift in power relative to their neighbors. These states, while less capable militarily than wealthy democracies, have access to the most advanced military technology. This phenomenon creates a new danger in the future, i.e., conflict with a nation having a very sophisticated and asymmetric capability.

The motivations and prosecution of these wars will be varied. In the Euro-Middle East region (west of the Urals to the Persian Gulf to the North Atlantic), oil and radical fundamentalism serve as potential catalysts to armed conflict and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future. In the Asian Arc region (stretching from Petropavlosk to India/Pakistan), resides one half of the world's population. In that region the shortage of food and arable land will pose increasingly demanding challenges in the next century. China alone has 1.2 billion people, making the U.S. population, by comparison, "right of the decimal point." Here also, war will continue to be viewed as a viable means of achieving or protecting their national interests. The conduct of war will be equally dissimilar. The general nature of combat notwithstanding, the very essence of conflict prosecuted by nations in the Asian Arc region is unlikely to be the same as that prosecuted by nations in the Euro-Middle East region. Disparate cultures, terrain, and climates will drive significant differences in their force structures, tactics, and warfighting strategies.

Collectively, the geostrategic environment, the near-term increased demand for operations on the lower end of the spectrum of crisis, and the continuing requirement to prepare to win the Nation's wars suggest a redefinition of general missions for the military. These missions can be categorized into seven general areas: Defending or Liberating Territory, Punitive Intrusion, Conflict Containment, Leverage, Reassurance, Core Security, and Humanitarian.



Within these seven mission areas lie numerous crises that the military may be tasked to respond to in the years ahead. While the magnitude and frequency of these crises are unpredictable, it is certain that the full spectrum of Army capabilities will be required to contribute to each of these general missions at some time in the next century.

Technology will also play a unique role in defining capabilities as we look to the future. Consequently, we must continue to leverage the superiority of the U.S. industrial base and maintain a decisive advantage across the full range of these mission areas. While at the moment we have technological superiority, advanced warfighting capabilities are available to any nation with the means to procure them. Not coincidentally, the most active customers lie in the "transitional zone."

Implications

- We must have a military capable of deterring or defeating an emerging competitor.
- A regional focus is required for rapid response to crises in the "transitional zone," where the Nation's vital interests are most at risk.
- The frequency of demands for land forces will increase as the Army is called upon to support peacetime engagement activities, i.e., multilateral military exercises, training, military-to-military exchanges, as well as crises on the lower end of the continuum, e.g., humanitarian relief, peacekeeping, peacemaking, etc.

- Technology will play an important role in enabling full-spectrum operations.

These implications suggest two primary axes: a regional focus for the traditional role of our Army and a balanced force mix to ensure "full-spectrum capability" to execute the roles and missions most likely to be levied on land forces as we enter the next century. Each of these axes will require leveraging technology to ensure swift victory with minimal casualties across the continuum of crisis.

Army Vision 2010 provides the directional azimuth for these parallel axes and assists in sizing, organizing, and equipping the Army, and in developing the doctrine for land force operations in support of Joint Vision 2010. Leader development and training programs will be continually refined to keep the Army prepared to execute these full-spectrum operations as the force of decision.

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